

WHITEPAPER

Do I Need Support, Managed Services, or Professional Services?

The performance of your database environment, whether on-premises or in the cloud, is a crucial component of your database operations. Percona makes open source database environments faster and more reliable.

Whether you run MySQL, MongoDB, PostgreSQL, or MariaDB, and wherever these are deployed, we can provide you with high-value database services.

 <h3>Percona Support</h3> <p>Percona Support offers cost-effective and flexible support subscriptions that enable you to partner with experienced open source database advisors who are available where and when you need them.</p>	 <h3>Percona Managed Services</h3> <p>Percona Managed Services provides tailored open source managed database services for your business 24x7x365.</p>	 <h3>Percona Professional Services</h3>	
		 <h3>Percona Consulting</h3> <p>Percona consultants have decades of experience solving complex open source database performance issues and design challenges.</p>	 <h3>Percona Training</h3> <p>Our bespoke open source database training can help pass that hard-earned knowledge to your DBAs and operations staff.</p>

People often ask us which service is the right fit, now and in the future. One of the great things about Percona is that we make it easy for you to move between the different services, depending on your needs. Many of our customers use multiple service offerings.

However, when you initially engage with Percona, choosing the right service may seem confusing. To help you make the right choice we have broken down each service and what it includes.

There are many reasons you might benefit from Percona's services. Perhaps you are looking to move to the cloud, or are among the **45%** of [recent survey respondents](#) now running DBaaS and needing some help. Maybe you're in the **74%** of people who experienced performance issues in the last year, or the **45%** who suffered unplanned downtime. You may even be attracted to the potential cost savings offered by open source like **81%** of respondents, or want to avoid vendor lock-in like **65%**.

To illustrate the different options we've referenced something many of us are familiar with: changing the oil in a car.



Support

So, you realize you're overdue for an oil change. The good news is that you mostly understand what is going on under the hood of your car, so you decide to take on the task yourself. You open the hood, use a pan to catch the old oil, and start work.

As you're going through this process, you might have a few questions and think "it'd be great if there was someone I could talk to, to get some help and advice about some of these fiddly bits".

Percona Support is that person.

In the database world, you're a smart administrator. You know how to optimize some queries, figure out which indexes are needed (and which are not), and understand the importance of setting proper data types. Basically, you can comfortably cover much of what is needed to keep your database online and running smoothly.

But, you may have a nagging suspicion that things could be better than they are, or you might encounter an issue where you're not 100% certain of the best response. In cases like these, being able to reach out and get support can be invaluable.

Using [Percona Support](#) can benefit you in a variety of ways. It can help you:



Keep critical databases online



Save money by preventing outages, reducing time to recovery, and decreasing complexity



Empower developers by enabling them to ask our support engineers questions



Focus your team on revenue generation by reducing database distractions and troubleshooting



Implement best practices through guidance provided by our support engineers



Rely on our expertise and Community links to identify and resolve bugs quickly

Companies often turn to Percona Support when they encounter problems that they can't solve themselves. In many cases, they have already invested effort and energy trying to work out a solution themselves. In situations like this, contacting support early can be invaluable, saving you time and money. Our support engineers can explain the optimal way to resolve the issue. They can validate your solution, or come up with an entirely new approach.

Support may be helpful when you want to ask questions relating to the future of your database. These could include:

"How will upgrading my database version impact my environment?"

"Should I consider migrating to a different database software?"

"How can I optimize my database before moving to the cloud?"

"What would be the benefit of moving to a high availability solution?"

While the engineers won't go into detail on the issues that are likely to be faced by your specific environment, they can provide you with guidance to help you make an informed decision. With our oil change analogy, these sorts of questions are similar to asking "what would be the benefit of changing the air filter, too?" or "should I also consider replacing the brakes?"

In the case of changing the air filter, you may decide that the task is within your skill set, as our support engineers gave you the confidence to take on the job. However, changing your brake pads is more involved, so you consider hiring an expert instead.



Consulting

A consulting engagement is like bringing your car to a mechanic with an issue, and trusting them to fix it. You drop the car off with an identified problem and that problem is resolved. The car is returned to you, sometimes even washed and cleaned to make it a little nicer for your drive home.

Occasionally, while performing the work, additional issues are identified. They may not be resolved during the initial engagement and instead require a new project and scope of work.

This is what would happen if your mechanic noticed that you needed a new exhaust system while replacing the brakes. They don't do the work without consent; instead, they put together a quote and time estimate for the additional work and present it to you. This also happens with consulting engagements.

When you contact Percona with a project that is consulting-based, such as designing a new high availability environment, we will meet with you to identify your exact needs and goals.

From these meetings, a scope of work document is created. This outlines the current and required state of the database, along with the scope of the project. This scoping document is presented to you along with the cost of the project. You then decide whether you want to move ahead.

If you decide to proceed, your consultant(s) will be scheduled for mutually convenient times. In some projects there may be tasks that are more easily accomplished together. On other tasks the consultant might work alone. It's often better having the consultant work on portions of the project alone, as that they can do this at times when there is less user traffic (and you are more likely to be sleeping).

For many projects, your involvement is mostly needed at the beginning and end. At the start, it is helpful to get questions answered, provide project planning, and work out access details. At the end, the consultant presents results and is available for questions.

Projects can be done remotely, or (in usual times) the consultant can come to your site. As many companies now run in cloud environments, engagements are far less bound to specific locations.

Scheduling a remote engagement is usually quicker and easier as there is no need to plan for travel. A remote engagement is often set up as a series of half-day engagements, allowing more scheduling flexibility. This can also be helpful if you need to make decisions or initiate changes in your environment as part of the project, as it means there are times where the consultant is not actively working with you.

For on-site engagements, we base these on an eight-hour day. On-site engagements are recommended for things like architecture and design planning. Additionally, multi-phased consulting may require a combination of on-site and remote work.

[Percona Consulting](#) can help:



Optimize your database to maximize application performance



Troubleshoot and diagnose performance issues



Recommend architecture and design improvements



Ensure application availability



Update current software, or migrate to new software or platforms

As all consulting projects are scoped engagements, we can be flexible when it comes to delivery model and process.

So, to return to our car reference. There are situations where it would be better if someone could handle the maintenance tasks for you. This is like having someone come by regularly to ensure the car is in top condition, proactively resolving issues that occur. In the case of your database environment, this is Percona Managed Services.



Managed Services

Imagine a situation where your car is always ready for you. The fuel tank is full, the interior and exterior are clean, and the regular maintenance tasks have been completed. All you need to do is drive. A Managed Services contract delivers this for your business

With [Percona Managed Database Services](#), you basically add Percona to your database team. You don't have to worry about hiring and retaining internal staff as Percona always has people available to deal with issues that arise. You don't need to worry about having 24x7x365 coverage (or waking up your DBA in the middle of the night) as we are monitoring your environment around the clock.

With a Managed Database Services agreement, Percona assumes responsibility for monitoring your environment, resolving any issues, and delivering proactive database environment reporting to ensure you are always fully informed.

The team has monthly, quarterly, and biannual deliverables and performs ongoing optimization work. Any problems that come up can often be handled solely by our engineers, or they may need to work with you to reach an ideal resolution. You can be as hands-on or hands-off as you prefer. Either way, you can feel confident that your database is being constantly monitored and kept available.

As part of the agreement, we set up your environment to match our own best practice environment. Amongst other things, this means that high availability is implemented and a backup strategy that meets or exceeds your business requirements for Recovery Time Objective and Recovery Point Objective is in place. This all ensures that your data is readily available to your application.

Percona Managed Services help you:

- Stay competitive and agile
- Achieve business performance goals
- Maximize the value of your open source database
- Reduce cost and complexity
- Ensure 24x7x365 coverage of your essential systems
- Continuously improve and stabilize your environment
- Identify issues before they impact your systems
- Run on-premises, in the cloud, or in a hybrid environment as you prefer



Training

There are times where you want to do a job yourself, be it an oil change, or knowing how to optimize queries, but you don't have the necessary knowledge or skills required to accomplish the task. Percona training can give you the skills and guidance you need.

[Percona Training](#) provides many courses and can also create bespoke training to meet your business needs.

Examples of our training includes:

- Operations for MySQL
- Developers for MySQL
- ProxySQL Tutorial
- Percona XtraDB Cluster Operator for Kubernetes
- Percona XtraDB Cluster Tutorial
- MySQL 8.0 Introduction
- DBA Hands-On (MySQL 101)
- MySQL for Oracle DBA's

We offer training via a range of delivery methods to ensure you get a solid understanding of your database and how it works. There are exercises to complete, and instructors available to answer any questions that arise during the session.

Engagement Details

Support is provided via a contract, with a defined duration. During your support term, you can ask as many questions as you need to.

Percona offers three tiers of support, so you can choose the support agreement that best fits your needs. If you have a stable, specific number of servers, you can select our per server pricing. If you'd prefer more flexibility, rather than counting individual servers, you can select one of our unmeasured plans. You can also opt for a support agreement specific to your use of databases in the cloud.

If you are part of the **38%** of [survey respondents](#) who use third-party support to keep your applications running, Percona can help.

Consulting is performed as part of a scoped agreement. The team provides a scope of work, outlining the work to be done, giving an estimate of the number of days that it entails, and providing a price for the project. If during the engagement your consultant spots another issue they flag this and if required, prepare a quote for the new work.

Managed Database Services is based on an annual contract. Monitoring and response are included, as are numerous monthly, quarterly, and annual reports. Additional hours are available at a reduced rate and can be scheduled as required.

Training includes hands-on exercises to ensure you try out what you are learning, and can ask questions.

Conclusion

Whether changing the oil in your car, or improving your database performance, it is important you understand all the elements of the job you need to do, and all your available options.

If you just want a specific task accomplished, consulting may be the best option. You may want a trusted partner to reach out to for guidance and assistance, and here support may be a better fit. If you prefer a hands-off approach to your database, managed services may suit you most.

And of course, training is an excellent option when you want to improve your skills, or learn about a new technology or feature set.

Many of our customers start with a support agreement, then add a consulting engagement for a specific project. Some move to managed services on a temporary or permanent basis due to changing team structure, and many use Percona to train their teams on specific database software.

We can work closely with you to determine the best fit for your business.



Contact us

Our open source database support, managed services, consulting, and training experts can help you maximize your database performance. To learn more about how Percona can help, and for pricing information, please contact us at +1-888-316-9775 (USA), +44 203 608 6727 (Europe), or email us at sales@percona.com.